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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS DISENGAGEMENT OBSERVER FORCE

(for the period 20 May to 19 November 1992)

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INTRODUCTION

1. This report gives an account of the activities of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) in pursuance of the mandate entrusted to it by the Security Council in resolution 350 (1974) and extended by subsequent resolutions, most recently by resolution 756 (1992) of 29 May 1992. The report covers the period 20 May to 19 November 1992.

I. COMPOSITION AND DEPLOYMENT OF THE FORCE

A. Composition and command

2. As of November 1992, the composition of UNDOF was as follows:

Austria	453
Canada	180
Finland	356
Poland	136 a/
	1 125
United Nations military observers (detailed from the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO))	5
	1 130

a/ Includes one officer deployed as a military adviser to the representative of the Secretary-General in Afghanistan and Pakistan in accordance with the letter dated 12 March 1990 from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council (S/21188).

The above figures reflect a further reduction in UNDOF's strength in connection with the streamlining of the Force, which has now been completed (see S/23955, para. 3). UNDOF was assisted by UNTSO military observers assigned to the Israel-Syria Mixed Armistice Commission. Major-General Roman Misztal of Poland continued as Force Commander.

B. Deployment

3. UNDOF is deployed within and close to the area of separation (see attached map), with base camps and logistic units located nearby. Most of the military component of UNDOF Headquarters has been moved from Damascus to Camp Faouar and some elements have been moved to Camp Ziouani. This relocation has

had a positive effect on command and control. The civilian administrative staff remains in Damascus. The Force Commander maintains offices both in Camp Faouar and in Damascus.

4. The Austrian battalion is deployed in the northern zone of UNDOF's area of operation. At present, it mans 19 positions and 7 outposts and conducts 28 patrols daily at irregular intervals on predetermined routes in the area of separation. Its base camp is in Camp Faouar, eight kilometres east of the area of separation. The Finnish battalion is deployed in the southern zone; at present, it mans 17 positions and 7 outposts and conducts 26 patrols daily at irregular intervals in the area of separation. Its base camp is in Camp Ziouani, west of the area of separation.

5. The Polish logistic unit is stationed at Camp Faouar and the Canadian logistic company at Camp Ziouani. The Canadian signal unit has detachments at Camps Faouar and Ziouani. The military police has detachments at Camp Ziouani, Camp Faouar and Checkpoint C (former position 28).

C. Casualties

6. During the period under review, UNDOF sustained one fatal casualty as a result of a traffic accident. Since its inception, UNDOF has suffered 31 fatalities, 19 as a result of hostile action or accidents and 12 from other causes.

II. LOGISTICS

7. First-line logistic support is internal to the contingents. Second-line logistic support is provided by the Canadian and Polish logistic units. Third-line support is provided through normal supply channels by the United Nations. Damascus international airport serves as UNDOF's airhead; Tel Aviv international airport is also used. The seaports of Latakia and Haifa are used for sea shipments. Air movement control is provided internally by UNDOF headquarters staff; sea shipments are processed by local agents. In-theatre air support is provided by UNTSO on request.

III. ACTIVITIES OF THE FORCE

A. Functions and guidelines

8. The functions and guidelines of UNDOF, as well as its tasks, were outlined in the Secretary-General's report of 27 November 1974. 1/ UNDOF continued, with the cooperation of the parties, to fulfil the tasks entrusted to it. To this end, the Force Commander and his staff maintained close contact with the military liaison staffs of Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic. Both sides continued to impose some restrictions on UNDOF's freedom of movement.

B. Maintenance of the cease-fire

9. UNDOF continued to supervise the observance of the cease-fire between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic. The cease-fire was maintained and the operational situation in UNDOF's area of operation remained calm.

C. Supervision of the Agreement on Disengagement with regard to the areas of separation and limitation 2/

10. UNDOF supervised the area of separation to ensure that no military forces were deployed in it. This was done by means of permanently manned positions and observation posts, and by foot and mobile patrols operating at irregular intervals on predetermined routes by day and by night. In addition, temporary outposts were established and patrols were conducted from time to time as necessary.

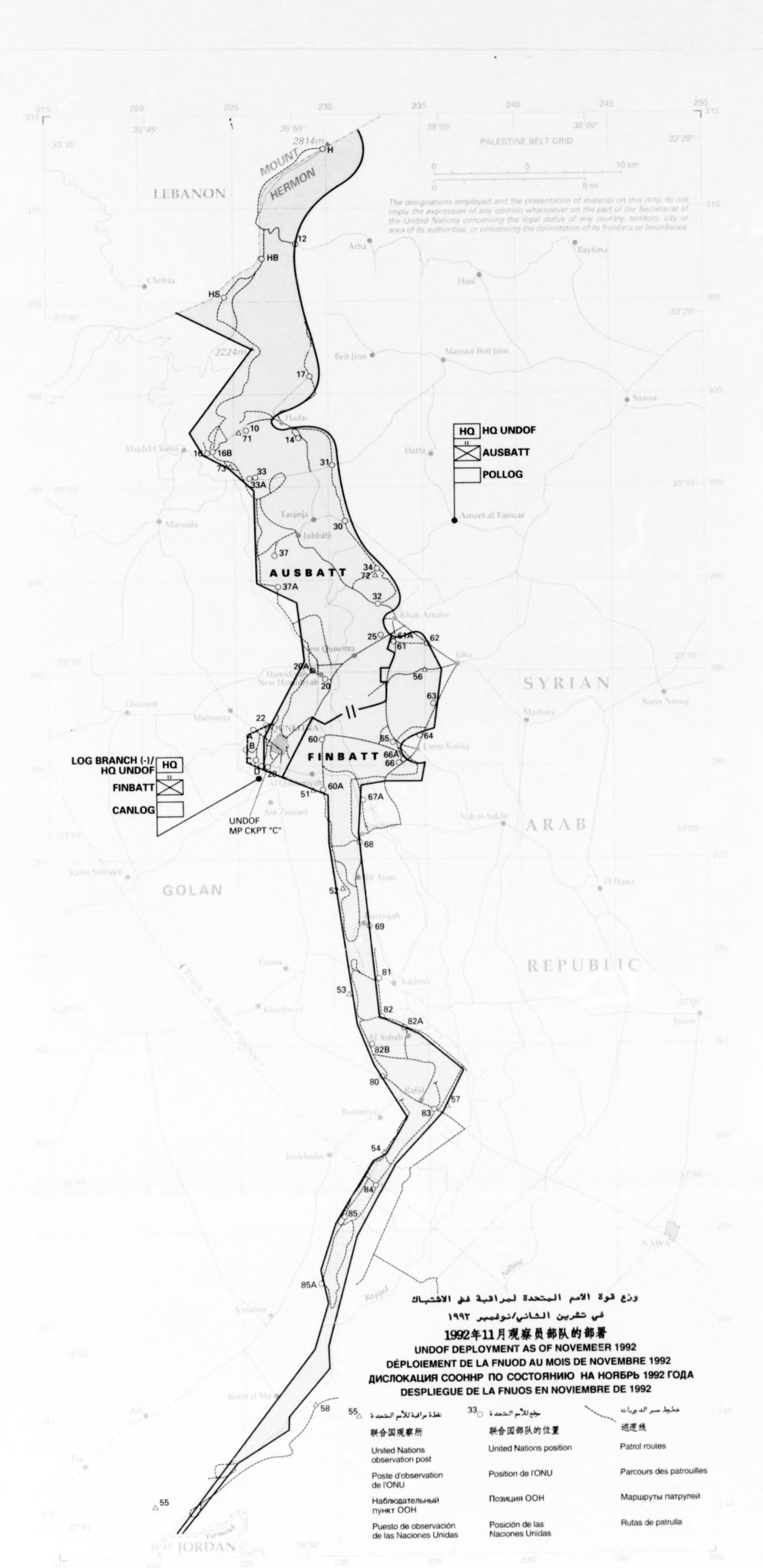
11. The Syrian authorities have been laying mines or replacing old ones in minefields in the area of separation along its eastern edge; in August and September, they carried out improvements on several anti-tank ditches. UNDOF's repeated representations to the Syrian authorities over these infringements of the area of separation have not, so far, met with a positive response.

12. UNDOF conducted fortnightly inspections of armament and force levels in the areas of limitation. Liaison officers from the party concerned accompanied the inspection teams. As in the past, both sides restricted the movement of inspection teams, denying access to some positions.

13. The safety of Syrian shepherds who graze their flocks close to and west of the A-line (see map) continued to be of concern to UNDOF. Frequent patrolling and the establishment of standing patrols prevented any serious incidents during the period under review.

D. Mines

14. Mines still pose a threat to members of the Force and to the inhabitants in the area of separation. During the period under review, the Polish mine-clearing teams cleared a total area of 55,650 square metres. One mortar shell, one artillery shell, two anti-aircraft shells, four hand grenades, five anti-personnel mines, eight anti-tank mines and a quantity of small-arms ammunition were found and destroyed.



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E. Humanitarian activities

15. UNDOF assisted the International Committee of the Red Cross with facilities for mail and for the passage of persons across the area of separation. Within the means available, medical treatment was provided to the local population.

IV. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

16. Should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate of UNDOF beyond 30 November 1992 and assuming continuation of its existing functions, the costs of the Force are estimated to be $3,034,000 gross ($2,953,000 net) per month from 1 December 1992 onwards. Consequently, appropriate financial provision would need to be made by the General Assembly at its current session. Unpaid assessments to the UNDOF special account as at 31 October 1992 amounted to $20.2 million.

V. IMPLEMENTATION OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 338 (1973)

17. In deciding in its resolution 756 (1992) of 29 May 1992 to renew the mandate of UNDOF for a further period of six months, the Security Council also called upon the parties concerned to implement immediately its resolution 338 (1973) and requested the Secretary-General to submit, at the end of the period, a report on the developments in the situation and the measures taken to implement that resolution.

18. The search for a peaceful settlement in the Middle East and, in particular, the efforts undertaken at various levels to implement Security Council resolution 338 (1973) are being dealt with in the Secretary-General's report on the situation in the Middle East, 3/ submitted in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 46/82 A of 16 December 1991.

VI. OBSERVATIONS

19. UNDOF, which was established in May 1974 to supervise the cease-fire called for by the Security Council and the Agreement on Disengagement between Israeli and Syrian forces of 31 May 1974, has continued to perform its functions effectively, with the cooperation of the parties. During the period under review, the situation in the Israel-Syria sector has remained generally quiet and there has been no serious incident.

20. Despite the present quiet in the Israel-Syria sector, the situation in the Middle East as a whole continues to be potentially dangerous and is likely to remain so, unless and until a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem can be reached. I continue to hope that determined efforts will be made by all concerned to tackle the problem in all its aspects, with a view to arriving at a just and durable peace settlement, as called for by the Security Council in its resolution 338 (1973).

21. In the prevailing circumstances, I consider the continued presence of UNDOF in the area to be essential. I therefore recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of the Force for a further period of six months, until 31 May 1993. The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has given its assent to the proposed extension. The Government of Israel has also expressed its agreement.

22. In conclusion, I wish to express my appreciation to the Governments contributing the troops and the UNTSO military observers assigned to the Force. I take this opportunity to pay tribute to Major-General Roman Misztal and to the men and women under his command. They have performed with efficiency and devotion to duty the important tasks assigned to them by the Security Council.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the Security Council, Twenty-ninth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1974, document S/11563, paras. 8-10.

2/ Ibid., Supplement for April, May and June 1974, document S/11302 and Add.1 and 2.

3/ A/47/672-S/24819.